

ARTHRITIS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What does arthritis mean and what does it do?

The word arthritis means joint inflammation. “Arth or Arthro” comes from the Greek word “arthron” which means joint and “itis” a Greek word for inflammation. Arthritis can cause joint pain, swelling, redness and stiffness; destroy joint surfaces and function; and attack other body tissues and organs. It is also known as rheumatic disease.

Is there a cure for arthritis?

No, there is no cure. Researchers continue to try to unravel the mysteries of arthritis while finding new treatments. It is hoped that one day there will be a cure for arthritis. Yet, there are many ways to manage or control arthritis and slow its course of degenerative changes.

What are common types of arthritis?

There are over 100 different types of arthritis. The most common form is osteoarthritis. Other common forms and related/similar conditions include rheumatoid arthritis, juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, gout, systemic lupus erythematosus, fibromyalgia, bursitis, tendinitis, and carpal tunnel syndrome.

What is the difference between osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis?

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease. It is the breakdown of the joint’s cartilage that leaves the bones exposed, causing them to rub together. Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disease in which the body’s immune system attacks joints, tissues, and internal organs.

Can I do something about my arthritis?

Yes! Proper diagnosis, treatment, and self-management are necessary to prevent or reduce long-term effects and maintain independence. Understanding the type of arthritis you have and taking an active role in treating and managing the disease is essential. Be sure to speak to your doctor, a rheumatologist (a doctor that specializes in the care and treatment of a person with arthritis), and contact the Missouri Arthritis/Osteoporosis Program, Arthritis Foundation, or your local regional arthritis center for additional information.

What is a self-management program?

Self-management, also called self-help, involves learning about and assuming responsibility for your daily care. This includes decisions you must make and action you can take to keep arthritis under control and stay as independent as possible. Self-management programs are six-to eight-week education courses that provide you an opportunity to learn more about the disease you have and how to manage and cope with it.



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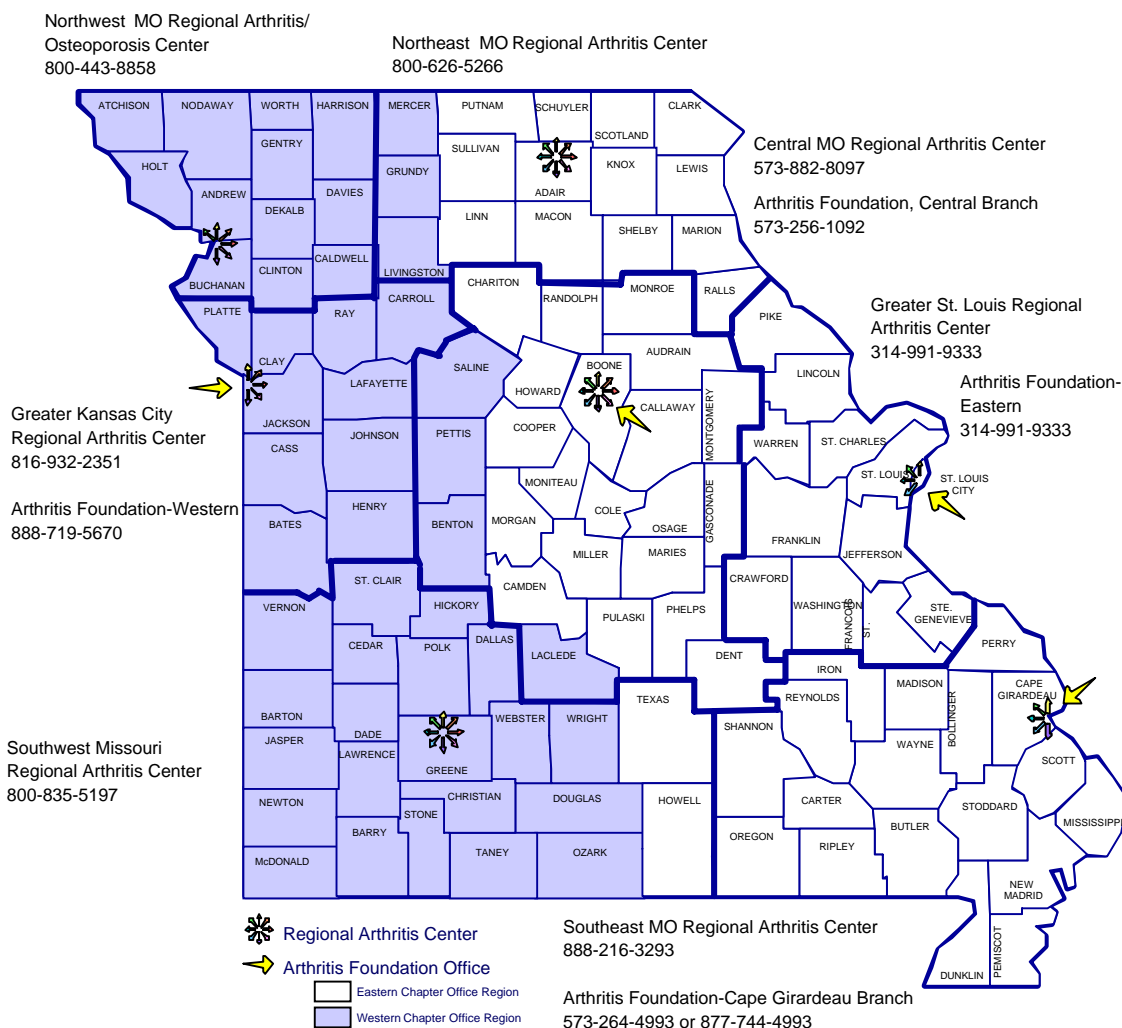
Who do I contact?

The Missouri Arthritis/Osteoporosis Program, the Missouri Arthritis Foundation chapters, the regional health care institutions, among others, partner to promote optimal quality of life for all Missourians affected by arthritis through early intervention, education, service, and collaboration.

Many of the programs and services are offered through a network of seven regional arthritis centers (RACs). These centers provide information and support

for persons and their families affected by arthritis. This includes organizing and/or providing community support groups, self-management programs, land and aquatic exercise classes, general information about the various types of arthritis, public forums and general presentations. In addition, the RACs organize continuing education courses for physicians, nurses, and allied health professionals.

The Missouri Arthritis/Osteoporosis Program and the Arthritis Foundation Chapters can assist you in getting information you need.



Alternate forms of this publication for persons with disabilities may be obtained by contacting the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services at 1-800-316-0935. Hearing impaired citizens telephone 1-800-735-2966.

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